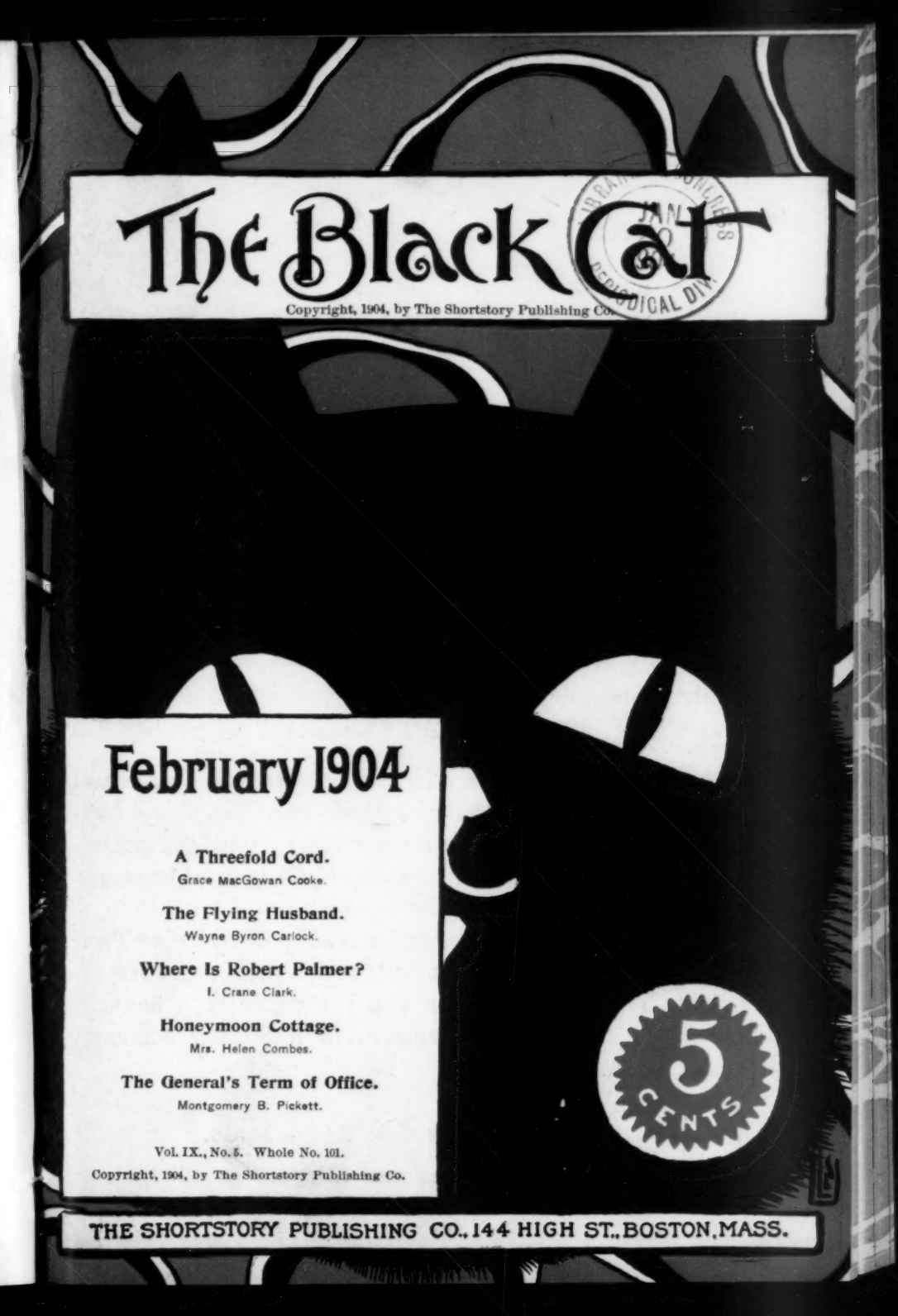
The Black Cat
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February 1904
A Threefold Cord.
Grace MacGowan Cooke.
The Flying Husband.
Wayne Byron Carlock.
Where Is Robert Palmer?
I. Crane Clark.
Honeymoon Cottage.
Mrs. Helen Combes.
The General's Term of Office.
Montgomery B. Pickett.
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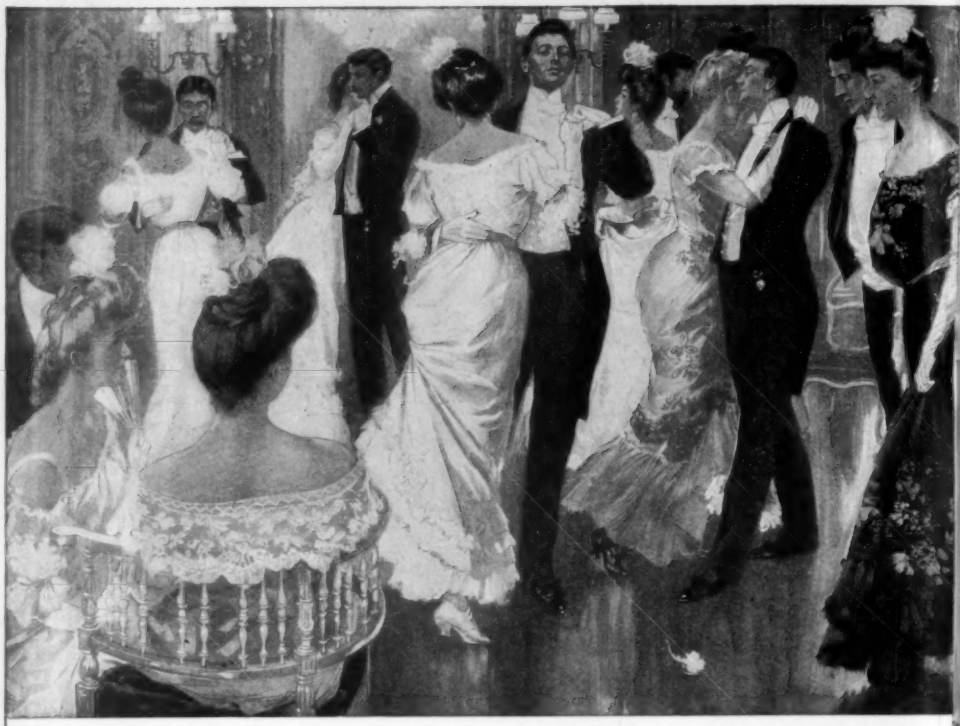

THE BELLES' SECRET

Young Gentleman on the extreme right (struck by the exquisite little foot and dainty slipper of the charming young lady in the center group, remarks to his partner): "By all that is graceful, what a pretty foot Gladys Manning has!"

His partner (who knows more than a thing or two): "The effect is good, no doubt; but 'credit where credit is due,' if you please. Don't you see that is a Sorosis slipper? Any foot looks pretty in a Sorosis slipper, George dear."

A. E. LITTLE & CO., Lynn, Mass.

Sorosis Shoes and Slippers

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A Threefold Cord.*

BY GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE.

EVENING had closed in with a gusty, yellow sunset. The shadow of Big Turkey Track lay black upon the squire's office; the little shoestring valley was in darkness, though the side of Little Turkey Track, beyond, showed splashes of gold upon its green.

I heard the shuffle and tramp of many feet, the hum of lowered voices, and then somebody said to the squire: "Man found dead up thar, Little Turkey Track way, an' Walt Turrentine was a standin' over 'im — he killed 'im. We've got 'em both, Square."

The light departed from the side of Little Turkey Track as though a candle had been blown out in heaven. I rose and went toward the porch, with its roof of balsam boughs and supports of peeled logs. At its edge stood a party of mountain men, lank, thin-jawed fellows, with a slouching grace about their movements, because they were all muscle and real alertness. They carried a motionless form, and somebody had thrown a coat over the dead man's face. I picked out Turrentine at a glance, because he was the most unconcerned-looking man in the group.

"Does he deny it?" asked the squire, in his plaintive, gentle

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voice — the squire is the mildest-mannered man that ever was a holy terror to evil doers, and a six-foot bundle of fearlessness.

Turrentine shook his head. He glanced up the mountain path toward Little Turkey Track. In the last of the light which lingered there I could see, far up, a woman's form climbing slowly down toward the settlement. The wind whipped her blue skirts about her; it jerked at the scarlet shawl over her head as she struggled forward.

For some reason the sight moved me strongly. Its effect upon the prisoner was instantaneous. He looked once more — a stolen glance this time — the woman was passing over the spot where they said the body had been found; "I wish't you'd lock me up," he said, suddenly. "Ye needn't look no furder fer th'—th' man 'at done it. Lock me up, Square."

The squire's office is an institution in the Turkey Tracks; a long, low, log building — just a string of rooms, some of which may be used for purposes of detention till a malefactor can be sent to Garyville. The dead man was carried into one of these rooms and laid with decent care upon a long table. His murderer was lodged in another. And then came the dash of rain which our windy, yellow sunset had promised us. Rain in the mountains is scarcely what dwellers of valley and plain understand by the word. The moisture comes down with such suddenness that it does not wait to formulate itself into drops, but descends with the souse of an overturned bucket.

I sat by the wide hearth where a fire of balsam cones crackled cheerily, and chatted with the squire. We were old friends, and I found even his silences often more informing than another man's conversation. It was in the wildest burst of the mountain rainstorm that somebody came beating on our door, and crying, "Square, Square! Lemme in! Hit's Phœbra Himes."

The squire rose and opened his door. The woman came in, flung the shawl off her black hair and looked about her defiantly. "I come down here to give myse'f up," she began in a low voice, and with a little shock I recognized the scarlet shawl and the dull blue skirt of her frock. It was the woman I had seen coming down the path from Little Turkey Track.

The squire regarded her with his benevolent gaze. "We've

got the feller 'at killed 'im, Phœb," he announced. "Hit's a man you'll be proud to see behind the bars — Walt Turrentine."

A quiver went over the woman's form; she gulped down a rising sob; I guessed that the statement carried no new information to her. "I tell you, I done it!" she protested. "I don't care which nor whether 'bout Walt Turrentine. He ort to be hung — I reckon he will be hung some day. But 'twas me killed that there peddler."

The squire laughed softly and shook his head. "So you knowed he was a peddler — well, I doubted that ye knowed that much about it," he commented, and his soft blue eyes fell to gazing upon the fire, as though he had forgotten the woman's presence.

She stood for a long time irresolute, the squire and I sitting before the fire, she back in the shadows, her big, black eyes going from one to the other. Finally she crept forward and put a hand on the squire's shoulder. "Have ye got —have ye got 'im —?" A nod toward the door supplied the conclusion of her sentence.

"Oh, yes, the cawpse is in that thar room —ye might go in an' look at it."

She flinched. "Walt," she began again, "Have ye got 'im locked up?"

The squire nodded.

"Well, then, you'll lock me up, an' turn him a-loose," she urged.

To my intense surprise the squire complied with a portion of her request, leading her to a room opposite those in which the murdered man and his murderer were disposed. When he came back, I asked, "You don't for a moment suppose ——"

"I ain't in the s'posin' business," the squire replied quietly. "These here mounting people — my own people, you understand, sir — has a mighty brief way when they're madded. Looks likely 'at Walt killed this here stranger; but if Phœb wants to be locked up, why I ain't a-goin' ag'in her. Ye see hit's this-a-way: Phœbra Himes, she's Walt Turrentine's wife." This is mountain fashion, in which the woman is mainly mentioned by her maiden name. "Well, Walt, he quit her, about three months ago. Old man Himes, he's a 'stiller, an' he's a hard man to live with. He ain't got nair a chick ner a child but Phœbra; an' some say he run

Walt off, an' some say Phœb quarreled with Walt, an' some say that Walt got tired of her an' quit her. The Lord He knows — an' I don't pretend to. The boys 'at brought the cawpse an' Walt in, told me that this here feller — an' I shouldn't never'a'thought he was a peddler 'thout Phœb had said so, fer he hadn't nairy pack — they said the peddler stopped at old man Himes's last night. Looks like Walt had come back to try to make it up with Phœbra, an' found this feller there, an' got sorter jealous like, an' had some little interruption with him, an' killed 'im. That's what I think; but I'm a-waitin' fer the sheriff from Garyville — he'll be here by mornin'."

There were no sounds from the room where the murdered man lay, nor from those where his self-accused murderers were detained; but the storm outside increased in fury. "Looks like hit might keep the sheriff back, ef hit sets in to rain this-a-way," the squire ruminated. "Hain't no human goin' out in sech a storm 'thout he p'intedly has to."

As if to disprove his words, again came the sounds of beating palms upon our door. This time a man's voice was raised from without. "Square," it roared and rumbled in a most profound bass, "Square, hit's Gaffin Himes! I got somethin' to tell ye — somethin' mighty important."

Again the squire opened the door. And this time there strode in a tall, black-bearded, fierce old mountaineer, who looked upon me with Phœbra Himes's very eyes. He was gemmed all over with rain-drops, and the great cloud of black beard which streamed across his chest was strung with mist jewels. He shook himself like a dog, and came up to the fire with that free stride which would have marked him, anywhere, an American. "Well, Square," he began, "I come to give myse'f up. That there feller that stopped at my house last night was a leetle too fresh fer me." He stole a look at the squire and myself as though to see how we took this statement.

"Bud Roper," he began again, "passed my place an' told me that you'd found the body. I reckon it'll save trouble ef I jest give myse'f up."

The whole thing had begun to look to me like a ghastly farce, a strange, grim extravaganza; but the squire chuckled genially

and looked the tall old Ishmael over with a gentleness which was scarcely ironical. "Well, now," he commented, "that was mighty accommodatin' of ye, Himes. Did Bud mention whar we found the body?"

The old man stared uneasily. "He didn't have to tell me," he returned, sullenly.

The squire chuckled again. "I was jest a wonderin' whether you could 'a' told me," he said. But without further comment he took a candle and showed our latest acquisition to the room beyond that in which his daughter was detained.

"I jest got five rooms in this here shack," the squire reflected, as he came back to me and the fire. "Ef any more fellers — er gals — 'at killed this here peddler comes down out o' the sky on us tonight, we'll p'intedly have to keep 'em in here, an' that'll interfere with our comfort."

It seemed, however, that the supply of the peddler's self-confessed murderers was exhausted. The rain lulled, came on again with greater fury, and died out finally down the valley. In my bunk under the eaves I lay long listening to it beating on the shingles. I wondered exceedingly what would be the outcome when the sheriff of Garyville arrived next morning; and so did the question vex sleep from my eyes that it was dawn and the sheriff's voice which finally roused me. The sheriff was indignant. "Now Square, now Square," he protested, "this here is jest one o' your pesky jokes. I can't take three folks back an' put 'em in jail for the murder o' one man."

"Oh, yes, you can — yes, you can," the squire reassured him. "Mebby they all got together an' killed the feller."

"That's a lie!" a woman's excited voice broke in. I killed that there peddler my own self. He was too fresh an' sassy with me — an' I killed him fer it. You turn pap an' Walt a-loose an' take me — sheriff — that's what you do!"

So spoke the mountain beauty, used to being obeyed, and to seeing things go her way.

"What did ye kill him with, Phœb?" asked the squire softly.

I was up, dressed, and in the court of justice by this time, where I could see as well as hear. The woman's terrified glance went from her husband to her father. "I killed him with — I killed him with — whatever he was killed with —that's what!"

In spite of the gravity of the occasion, there was a general snicker, particularly from the men gathered about the windows listening.

"U-m-m," grunted the sheriff from Garyville, and he leaned toward the squire for a whispered conference, which resulted in a man being sent into the room in which I knew the body of the murdered man lay.

"Don't you believe her, sheriff. Don't you put any faith in what that fool gal says," old Gaffin protested. "Hit was me done the killin' — an' good reason an' provocation I had. She jest wants ——" His glance traveled to Turrentine, and I saw that he believed now, as the rest of us did, that his daughter was trying to shield her husband. Last night he had been plainly fearful of her guilt; his avoidance of any mention of her name, when he must have known the squire had her in custody, showed that; today he looked at Turrentine, like a man at bay.

"Hit's wuss to have too many prisoners, than too few, fretted the sheriff from Garyville.

Just at this moment the emissary sent to investigate the manner of the murdered man's death, returned.

He stood looking at us all with the humorous expression of a man who knows the answer to a riddle which you are attempting to guess. "Well, Jate?" questioned the sheriff.

"I can't tell ye nothin' 'bout the cawpse — ner how he was killed, at all," Jate drawled, amiably. "The cawpse — he's gone."

"Gone!" shouted the sheriff, leaping to his feet. "Here, you boys. Jate, Alf Dubbs, Sam Bean, Wess Pamplin — I app'int you depities. Light out, an' hustle fer the fellers 'at moved that cawpse!"

There was a stir through the room, but Jate stirred not at all. "I seen the feller that taken him away," he began slowly.

"Where?" yelled the sheriff. "Why'n't ye stop 'im?" and "Where?" echoed all his deputies.

"Well, I never stopped him, 'cause I 'lowed he had the best right to move hit. He wuz the cawpse hisse'f, a-goin' down the road thar, 'bout two minutes ago. Yes, sir, that there cawpse hit walked off on hits two feet. I know the feller; he's fittified, an'

subjec' to these here spells. He'll lay like he was dead, sometimes, fer more'n a week. He'd a short one this here time."

A murdered man who walked away on his two feet was an unpleasing innovation to the sheriff from Garyville. He let it be known that this was so. He spoke fluently and at some length. "I don't believe a word on it!" he finally snapped. "I say, cawpses a-runnin' away on they own feet! Here, you Jate, take this feller — Turrentine — back, an' lock him up — he's a-goin' to Garyville with me to answer fer this." Then to Phœbra and her father, "You two kin go. You've told lies enough, an' made trouble enough fer one while."

Jate's jaw dropped; he saw that a man might be, at times, too facetious in his manner of conveying information to a court of justice. Gaffin Himes rose like a thunder cloud. "I ain't a-takin' no sass frum ——" he began in his deep bass. But Phœbra's terrified eyes were upon Walt Turrentine, where Jate and another were hurrying him back into the room from which he had been taken, her nervous fingers were clutched on her father's arm. "Come along, dad," she pleaded, "don't you mad the sheriff none." It was plain that, as the custodian of her husband, she desired to put the sheriff in a good humor.

I had often been the squire's guest for weeks at a time when trout fishing was good in Lost Creek; I knew the peculiarities of "the shack," as he called it. I was sitting on the porch edge when Phœbra Himes's black eyes encountered mine. I protest that I had no intention of sending her the message which she received from my glance; yet she came as though I had called her. "Which-a-way?" she inquired confidently. She was dragging old Gaffin in her wake.

"Around at the back," I whispered, and added, somewhat to my surprise, "I'll keep watch for you."

A moment after, I rose and sauntered to the porch end. Thence I stole to a big gum tree whence I could command a view of the sheriff from Garyville, who was still arguing, and of Phœbra Himes and her father, standing by a chink at the back of the room in which Walt Turrentine was lodged. I had pushed the chinking out from between that pair of logs myself, to secure better ventilation. The girl's face was raised, and pale with feel-

ing. "He ain't got no right to take ye away, Walt. The Lord only knows what they'll do with ye down to Garyville!" This was the mountaineer's terror and horror of the valley and the settlement.

"What made you come down an' say you killed the feller, Phœb?" I heard Turrentine's voice inquire huskily from within.

"Oh, Walt," cried the woman, "I thought you'd killed 'im, an' I'd done ye so mean, when ye come back — a-lettin' on like I liked him — him! by side o' you, Walt — I couldn't do no less than to try an' he'p ye out."

Turrentine, within, laughed. "I reckon yer pap didn't have no sich reason," he commented.

Phœbra turned to her father; it was plain to the onlooker how she tyrannized over that wild old fellow. "What on airth did ye come down here fer, pappy?" Phœbra inquired with asperity. "Ef you hadn't 'a' mixed in it, the sheriff wouldn't 'a' been half so mad."

"Laws a' mighty, Phœb, you got so 'rageous at the feller when he tried to court ye, that I 'lowed ye must 'a' follered 'im an' lay-wayed 'im," Gaffin answered meekly. "Ye know ye threatened him ye would — aifter Walt had went off mad. Hain't ye comin' back with us, Walt?" he inquired.

Again I heard Turrentine laugh. Himes beckoned to me. "Square, he kep' some o' the boys in this same room, 'bout a year ago," the old moonshiner explained, as I strolled up. "Ef you'd give me a lift with this here pole — we two — no Phœb, jest two's enough — that there log ——"

Gaffin fondly believed that he was whispering, but the thunder of that voice could not get below a mutter, as we put a sapling under, pried at a log near the chimney, and saw it roll quietly out.

Turrentine followed it. We could still hear the sheriff arguing with the squire; but now he was getting his party in shape to return to Garyville. As Turrentine stepped out, Phœbra had turned away. Now she sent those black eyes questing over her shoulder. "I'm sorry, Walt," she breathed.

"Sorry I got out?" inquired Walt, with a sheepish, side-long look at us. "How is it with you, Pap Himes?"

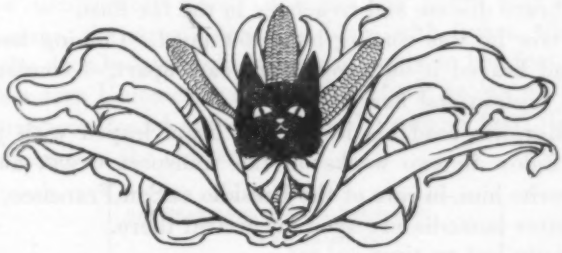
The old man pushed the thick, black locks off his forehead, "Lord, Walt, I allus tried to git Phœb what she wanted," he confessed, genially. "Ef you're what she wants, then you're what I want — an' we better be steppin', 'fore the sheriff ketches up to us."

"Well, what does Phœb want?" inquired Phœbra's husband.

"I 'low ye got yer answer to that last night," old Gaffin said. "Here, you an' Phœb start on together — I'll foller."

The early sun, looking over the high shoulder of Little Turkey Track, sent long beams down the side, gilding once more the patches of foliage, as its sinking rays had gilded them the night before. And where then I had watched with strange agitation Phœbra Himes climbing down alone, I now gazed after the reunited family breasting the steep mountain path together.

Suddenly Jate's voice struck on my ear; I turned my head toward the arguing groups in front of the squire's office. "Thar! Thar he goes, sheriff!" And I saw the sheriff from Garyville look with ludicrous discomfiture to where "the cawpse" was ambling blithely down the valley toward Hepzibah.



The Flying Husband.*

BY WAYNE BYRON CARLOCK.

CAPTAIN RICHARD SUMNER had left New York a First Lieutenant, and but two months married. He had wooed and won pretty Marjorie Van Orst of Harlem during his West Point days, and was about to make her his wife when the sudden opening of hostilities between the United States and Spain tore him from his sweetheart and sent him to Cuba, a Second Lieutenant of Volunteers.

But the Fall following that memorable Spring brought him safely back again. He returned to the arms of his little wife-to-be, a hero, brown from the heat of battle, and on his shoulder-straps the proud and advanced distinction of a golden bar.

How sweetly happy, then, had begun their honeymoon! The earth with its Autumn gold was dross compared to the joy of their love, — a love rooted in the hearts of youth, strength and hope.

So, when opportunity and appointment, like two captor knights, a second time tore from Marjorie her valiant lord, it was with many tears and misgivings that she released him from this paradise to brave disease and treachery in the far East.

But now he was coming home for good. Coming home after they had braved it out, two long years apart, — coming back a hero, a captain and her lover.

As Marjorie read his letter, her heart leaped with joy. He would follow in two weeks on the transport *Grant*, and if she would write him, in care of the Presidio at San Francisco, he could get a letter immediately upon his arrival there.

Marjorie lost no time.

> MY OWN DARLING DICK:
>
> Oh, you don't know how happy I am to-day. Your letter has sent me wild, and I just want to sit down and cry for joy, my heart is so full of happiness.

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Hurry to me, dearest; waste no time. To think! Only two more weeks! Ah, darling, but these two weeks will seem like two more years. I want you to hurry. The fastest train will be too slow. Oh, how I wish there were some quicker way. Wire me from 'Frisco, and every day along the line. I want you to. I want to know that you are getting nearer.

Fly, Dick, fly! I'll be at the train to meet you. I shall count the hours till then — so fly — fly to the loving arms of

Your longing, waiting wife,

MARJORIE.

The last day of two long, miserable weeks was just dragging to its close, as Marjorie sighed heavily in her Harlem apartment.

Then three more days passed, then four, when her former hours of hope and expectancy grew slowly into those of terrible doubt and fear. As the hour hand crept wearily around toward twelve o'clock noon on the fifth day, Marjorie's doubts became mingled with feelings of agony and despair.

She didn't dare allow herself to think, now. It couldn't be possible that Fate would be so cruel as to take him from her by some dreadful accident after they had braved it out so long, and when he was actually coming home. The thought was terrible enough, that, though a message should come now, five more days must elapse before he could reach her.

How unutterably slowly dragged the hours that afternoon. Dusk came, the streets began to blaze with lights, when a ring from the door-bell brought her tremblingly to her feet.

A Western Union chap delivered his little yellow envelope, and Marjorie soon found herself nervously, almost fearfully, tearing her fingers into the message.

SAN FRANCISCO, 11.30 A.M., Dec. 3, 1901.
MRS. RICHARD SUMNER,
408 Manhattan Ave.,
New York.
Anchored last night; delayed. Letter in hand. Off to-day. Love.
DICK.

Further fear of accident now left Marjorie's mind. For a while she felt contented, but she dreaded the few lonely days to follow, and wondered many times what delayed the *Grant*. She

shuddered as she thought how many times Dick may have escaped death from storms.

However, her heart felt lighter, she partially enjoyed her evening meal, and succeeded in becoming quite cheerful.

The clock had barely told eight, when, to her utter surprise, another telegram was thrust into her hand. All the hope and spirit of her being seemed to be torn terribly from her at one fell swoop.

What else but calamity could it bring so soon?

OGDEN, 2.06 P. M., Dec. 3, 1901.
MRS. RICHARD SUMNER,
408 Manhattan Ave.,
New York.
Am flying to you. Be cheerful. Will soon be home.
DICK.

Marjorie stood stupefied. So many puzzling thoughts began to whirl through her brain that she became all nervous excitement.

"December third is today," she exclaimed to herself. Then a thought came over her so suddenly that she sprang almost spasmodically from her chair.

"Impossible!" she gasped. "That distance over the mountains in two hours and a half — why, no train could do it — what does it mean?"

The problem stunned her, and she racked her brain for some plausible way out of it.

Her confusion soon trebled, when, following the other telegram but a little over an hour, a third message was delivered into her hand.

CHEYENNE, 3.30 P.M., Dec. 3, 1901.
MRS. RICHARD SUMNER,
408 Manhattan Ave.,
New York.
Safe over mountains. Now for the prairies.
With love,
DICK.

Marjorie's utter incomprehension became almost dangerous. To think of some reasonable way out of this she could not, and she paced up and down the room in delirious excitement. The tension on her nerves became unbearable, and the perspiration stood out on her brow like cold drops of dew.

Still time dragged. She watched the clock now, more eagerly than ever. No way in the world appeared to her how these

miracles were happening, but she came to believe that others would follow. She was beginning to expect them.

Her suspicions were correct. About 10.30 she went to the door, opened it and peered about, as though someone or something should have appeared. Just at that moment another messenger came running up the stairway to meet her.

OMAHA, 6 P. M., Dec. 3, 1901.
MRS. RICHARD SUMNER,
408 Manhattan Ave.,
New York.
Am making 300 miles per hour. Home to-night.
DICK.

Marjorie didn't try to think any more. She didn't care. She only knew that her long-looked-for husband was coming to her — coming so swiftly and in such awful mystery, that she didn't even dare think about it.

Yet visions both wonderful and strange came floating before her eyes. She saw Dick dashing through space in some infernal aerial machine at such a velocity as to defy the laws of heaven and earth, and only alighting now and then to send her a message as she had desired.

Or maybe it was a smoke and fire-belching locomotive, tearing over the track at such a mad, runaway speed as to leave only a black streak visible as it passed.

Horrible and distorted pictures came and went, one after the other, but she tried to escape them all in the one grand thought that Dick would be with her that night.

It was nearly twelve o'clock when, throwing off this nerve-racking agitation, she ran to answer the telephone.

"Hello — yes — 72139 Morningside? Yes — well, this is Mrs. Sumner — who — what is it?"

"Wait a minute," came the reply, and then she heard the operator say at the other end of the wire:

"Hello, Chicago — Chicago — yes — here's your party — yes — now then, all right."

"Hello."

"Hello — who is this?"

"Mrs. Sumner?"

"Yes. Who are you?"

"Dick."

"Dick!"

"That's me — just arrived and must leave in two minutes. How's the little girl?"

"O Dick, are you alive? Tell me, tell me quick — how are you doing it — hurry or you'll kill me!"

"Wait a minute — confound it — must tear away — good-bye."

"Dick!"

"Good-bye."

"Dick! Dick! ! — Hello! Hello — Central, hello — Hello!"

"Your party's gone — ring off."

A sudden click in the receiver told Marjorie that hope of further interview was now dismally lost.

She rang off, but with almost a determination to call up Central again and give them a piece of her mind. How dare they cut her off before she was through talking! Standing there, staring stupidly at the thing, she was a perfect picture of bewilderment and disconsolateness.

Then she went to pacing the floor again. The fact that Dick himself had spoken with her deepened the problem and fastened its awful mystery upon her with startling truth.

But he was coming — coming nearer and nearer at lightning speed. This was the glorious part of it. She tried hard not to let the other part worry her.

Thirty minutes more passed, with Marjorie's mind in this state of restless perplexity.

She felt that something else must happen soon. She had no idea what it would be — what it possibly could be, but happen it must — some new impulse to the enigma, or her mental tension would soon be unbearable — existence itself would be no longer possible.

The air became stifling; her clothing seemed to be pressing in upon her, and pressing her life out; the furniture began to swim before her eyes and everything looked distorted and unnatural.

Then the something happened!

The telephone again.

"Hello — This is Mrs. Sumner — yes, Mrs. Sumner — who is this? Who is — can't you speak — who ——"

"Buffalo wants you."

She held her breath. The wires were singing weirdly as the operator's following words came faintly from the other end of the wire.

"Hello, Buffalo — Buffalo — what? Well — this is New York. Yes — very well, here is your party."

Then to her: "All right, Buffalo will speak to you now."

"Hello."

"Is this Mrs. Sumner?"

"Yes, yes! Dick!"

"As sure as you're alive."

"O Dick, for Heaven's sake, speak, quick — tell me!"

"Don't speak so loud, dear."

"Dick, where are you?"

"Why, in Buffalo!"

"But how on earth did you get there — speak to me!"

"Now, don't get excited — I'm flying to you."

"What do you mean? Tell me the truth! I'm dying by inches!"

"Wait till I get home."

"No, now — quick!"

"Will be home in thirty minutes!"

"I'll be dead — speak!"

"Thirty minutes — good-bye!"

"Dick! Dick!"

"Good-bye."

"Wait! Dick! Hello. Hello — Dick — Hello Central —— Hello! Ting-a-ling-ling-ling."

"Well?"

"Give me Dick — I mean Buffalo — do you hear — Buffalo!"

"Your party is gone, Madam."

She knew it was of no use trying further, and the way she slammed the receiver into its socket left its effect upon both these parts of the mechanism.

Her attitude changed now from feverish exhaustion and perplexity to feelings of injury and retaliation.

She was going to do something herself — she didn't know what it would be, but she was going to do it.

Rushing into her boudoir, she looked about excitedly. Her own reflection from the mirror was the first thing to arrest her attention. She scarcely knew herself — her eyes were so wild — her hair shockingly disheveled. As this was something to be remedied, she lost no time in making herself as comely as possible. As a natural sequence this brought into mind what she wanted to do. *She would meet him!*

She didn't know where, when or how, but she realized she must do it — also that she must hurry — it might already be too late.

Seizing her furs from the bed she made for the door. She was just turning the knob, when the telephone called for the third time — she had a mind to ignore it and rush on down the stairway, but her mind suddenly changed.

"Hello — well — what do you want?"

"Mrs. Sumner?"

"Yes!"

"How's that?"

"I said yes! Who is this?"

"Don't you know my voice?"

"Dick — It's you!"

"I think you're right."

"Where are you?"

"In New York!"

"New York!"

"Grand Central Station!"

"I'm coming down to meet you!"

"You're too late."

"Why?"

"I'll be with you before you can get out of the house."

"You can't — you're five miles away!"

"I'll be there in less than two minutes. Good-bye!"

"What do you mean?"

"Good-bye."

"Dick! Dick!"

She halted for a moment and then almost involuntarily ran back to the door leading to the outside hall.

Suddenly a patter of feet was heard ascending the lower stairs. Faster and faster — nearer and louder it came, causing

her hand to cling to the knob like gripping steel. She tried with all her might to open the door, but her muscles defied her — she felt riveted to the spot. The footsteps were now near the top of the stairway. With one terrific effort more, the door opened violently — her arms flew upward — "Dick!" she screamed in a wildly happy tone.

A handsome young man of soldierly bearing dashed over the threshold, and caught her in his arms.

. . . . . .

"You see, it was all very simple," said Dick, after caressing his little wife into calmness, but finding that it was absolutely impossible to keep a solution of the mystery from her any longer.

"Since your letter wished so anxiously that I could fly home, I thought out a plan to give you the greatest surprise of your life. I found that my train would reach New York at midnight, December 3d. Then, after inquiring the time for a telegram to travel, allowing for difference in time, I wrote out a message, left the money, with a liberal tip, to have it held and sent at the precise hour named on the 3d, and left 'Frisco without letting you know that I had even arrived. I left messages, in a like manner, at Ogden, Cheyenne and Omaha, being careful to allow time enough for them to properly follow each other. From Omaha, I wired Max Evans at Chicago, and Harry Fordice at Buffalo, who, you know, are friends of mine, asking them to meet me at these stations. Then I arranged with them about the telephoning from these points at a certain hour, with a request to imitate my voice as closely as possible. I did the telephoning in New York myself, after I had arrived, but instead of it being at the Grand Central, it was at the Morningside Pharmacy, down here on the corner."

"Dick, I will never forgive you!"

"But it was like flying, wasn't it?" And he caught her again in his arms.

Where is Robert Palmer?*

BY I. CRANE CLARK.

ROBERT PALMER was my brother-in-law. Inasmuch as the public has read the account of his mysterious disappearance, and as I have heard many conjectures concerning his probable fate, I think it but meet that I should publish a letter which I have received, and which may aid some people in arriving at a conclusion as to his fate, although, to my mind, it serves only to make the matter more weird and strange.

Robert Palmer was the husband of my sister, Alice. He was well-to-do, healthy and happy. His home relations were the most pleasant and his business affairs flourishing. He was a member of several well-known city Clubs, but mostly frequented a select little affair on Yetton Street, of which he and several warm friends were charter members. He was last seen on the evening of November 1st at the Club on Yetton Street, and the most diligent search by expert detectives had failed to find even the slightest clue to his whereabouts or fate until the receipt of the letter to which I have referred. This letter, addressed to me, William C. Buckner, and signed William Clinton, — a name unknown to me, — was dated Nov. 15, 1902. As I give it entire, no quotation marks are necessary. It was as follows:

. . . . . .

I am a stranger to you. I was an intimate friend, however, of poor Bob Palmer. I may as well come to the point at once. I write for the purpose of giving you information concerning your ill-fated brother-in-law. I sat at the Yetton Street Club last night when his unfortunate wife (now widow) called to ask if anything had been heard of her husband. I had heard of her previous visits there, but this was the first one I had witnessed, and the

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sight of her distress, as she wavered between hope and despair and begged for news of her husband, has prompted me to dispel the doubts surrounding that husband's fate and to end her suspense at once. This letter will be deposited in the mail by a friend of mine. I am going abroad, and will be unable to leave my future address, as indeed, I hardly know my own plans. These are the facts:

Bob Palmer and myself were members of the Yetton Street Club. You were, perhaps, aware of Bob's unusual political ideas. He was not as patriotic as some of his friends could have wished. In fact, he considered our form of government a theory and not a fact. He held that, while our government made it possible for all to have equal rights, in actual practice it fell far short of its possibilities. He was noted for his sympathy and friendship for the unemployed and the poor — the weak and the oppressed. He would never state whether he was a Socialist, or just what he was in his political beliefs, but he would deny that he was an anarchist, which was a nickname that some of us had given to him. He, however, claimed that his was the only true patriotism. "Would you have a churchman worship the cross and never know the Christ it represented?" he would ask. "If you fellows are patriots, what are you patriotic about? Is it the governmental figurehead, or do you have a real regard for the people themselves, and treat them justly and kindly and respectfully?" Whatever his political faith, it is certain that he was sincere and earnest, and, if anything, a little too ready to put into practice whatever he might think was right. I simply mention this to throw light upon the event which I am about to relate.

James Carnegie was also a member of our Club. Carnegie is (or rather was) an amateur hypnotist. He had always claimed powers in this line, but of late he had become the protégé of a professional hypnotist, and stated that he was making great progress. It was arranged that Bob and myself should witness some of his experiments, and we had agreed to meet him at the club at 8.30 on the evening of November first, and he was to have on hand two or three newsboys whom he had coaxed and paid into promising to act as subjects upon whom he might exercise his uncertain powers.

The three of us were on hand at the appointed hour. We secured a private room, and Carnegie gave instructions that when the newsboys arrived they should be admitted. A game of cards, cigars and drinks served to while away the time until nearly ten o'clock, when it became evident that Carnegie's subjects had repented of their promise, and that the original purpose of our meeting must be dropped for the time being. Both Bob and myself had been very sceptical as to Carnegie's powers as a hypnotist, and the non-appearance of the newsboys left room for one of us to express a bantering doubt as to his ability. In reply, Carnegie defied either of us to subject ourselves to his influence. Bob laughingly offered himself, saying, "I will be your victim." He little dreamed how true were his words.

"I should judge that you would make a good subject," said Carnegie. "The only thing that would hinder would be the application of the old truism that familiarity breeds contempt, but to overcome this let me seriously tell you that hypnotism is becoming a definite science, and that by study and natural aptitude one advances in it the same as he would in medicine, astronomy, or the like. I do not joke with you when I state that I have developed marked powers as a hypnotist. You can assist me by trying to believe that I do possess this power, which should be an easy matter, as it is the truth, and a perfectly natural truth. When people laugh at what they call my crankiness, I have the satisfaction in return of laughing at their ignorance."

While talking, Carnegie had arranged two chairs facing one another, and he now invited Bob to be seated in one. Bob seated himself with a nervous laugh, for Carnegie's manner had convinced him, as well as myself, that he was thoroughly in earnest, and had silenced our ridicule. Carnegie took the other chair, while I remained an interested spectator.

"Now," said Carnegie, "if you really wish to assist me you should adapt yourself to obeying my will even before I gain an influence over you. For instance: "Shut your eyes. Open them. Fold your arms. Unfold them. Stand up. Sit down."

Carnegie gave these commands in a curt, sharp tone of voice, and they were promptly obeyed by Bob, although it was plain that the latter was simply following instructions, and had not surren-

dered himself to the former's will by any means. Meanwhile Carnegie gave his whole mind and attention to the task before him. He appeared oblivious of my presence. His muscles seemed to contract. There was something panther-like in the manner in which he crouched upon his seat. His face assumed a hard, drawn expression. He became a quivering mass of suppressed activity, which manifested itself in his keen, black eyes, the latter glowing and expanding and lighting up until a veritable black flame seemed to shoot from their depths, concentrating itself in a gaze so intense and penetrating that even I, who was not its object, became so fascinated that it was with an effort that I withdrew my attention from the hypnotist to look at his subject. The operations of the former were evidently making an impression upon Bob, who returned Carnegie's gaze with an intent, half-puzzled expression upon his face. Suddenly he raised his hand to his brow and struck out faintly toward Carnegie, as though to ward off the influence which he realized was seeking to overpower him, rising partly from his chair at the same time, and giving vent to a constrained laugh.

"Sit down!" Carnegie had arisen and his whole being entered into his voice and blazed out of his eyes as he gave the command. Bob obeyed. A triumphant look spread over Carnegie's face, and with a faint-hearted feeling of awe I realized that we were fairly launched upon our voyage into the unknown mysteries of hypnotism. Carnegie's efforts, however, were not abated. He now leaned forward, with his piercing gaze still riveted upon Bob's eyes, part of the time softly stroking his brow with his hands, and part of the time making strange passes before his eyes, which would have appeared ridiculous to one who could not have seen the wonderful effect they were producing upon the subject. Upon dropping back into his seat, the puzzled, dazed look deepened in Bob's face. His eyes became listless and finally closed, and with a deep sigh he allowed his head to sink upon his breast, and surrendered himself to the strange influence which had been forced upon him. He appeared to be in an unnatural sleep. His face was colorless. His breathing was not audible, nor was there any rising and falling of his bosom to indicate that he breathed at all. Indeed, he was apparently in a state of com-

plete exhaustion, and it seemed doubtful that he still lived. I glanced apprehensively at Carnegie. The appearance of the latter reassured me somewhat. His muscles had relaxed. The unnatural light had faded from his eyes, and a relieved expression had overspread his countenance. He stood calm and collected, with his right hand resting lightly upon the forehead of our unconscious friend, a few glistening beads of perspiration being the only evidence of the struggle in which he had engaged.

"He is now completely under my influence," he said, turning to me with a grim smile. "I am master of his body and of his mind. He will obey my slightest command. He will believe my most improbable tale. What shall I tell him?"

Then I did a very foolish thing. I suppose it was because my feelings had been so intense and serious for the last few minutes that I experienced a sort of reaction. At any rate, I went to the other extreme, and instead of regarding the condition of poor Bob in the sober manner which it merited, I attempted a silly joke.

"Why," said I, "tell him that he is an anarchist, and that the world is a great big bombshell, with which he will be able to blow up and destroy the universe."

Carnegie seemed to hesitate for a moment, and then said, "Well, there can be no harm." Turning his attention to Bob he caused him to open his eyes, saying to him, "Bob, I suppose you know that you are the greatest anarchist that ever lived? It has been decided to reveal to you that this earth is nothing but a great bombshell, and that by blowing it up you can destroy the universe."

Bob slowly rose to his feet, Carnegie carefully rising also, and standing in front of him.

"Yes," said Bob, "I am indeed an anarchist. I am an enemy of law. The law is a swindle — a cheat. At each hampered step which science has taken in the march of progress the law has stood before her and barred her passage. When ignorance and superstition have bowed their heads to the opinion of intellect the law has been the last to release its straining grasp on iniquity and injustice, and the law of nature is the most unjust and cruel of all. But I can put a stop to it. I can put a stop to it all. I

will use the law of nature to defeat the law of nature. To me has been given the secret of striking the balance."

His voice had risen to a shout, and reaching into his vest pocket he drew forth a match which he lighted, and continued, "This match I will apply to the gas which escapes from the little opening at my feet, and thus will I blow up the very universe itself."

"No, no," said Carnegie, now interfering, "You do not really mean that you are an anarchist. You are mistaken. While it takes the law a long time to reach some evils, yet the general effect of the law is good, and even this slowness to correct these evils which you complain of is, in one sense, a good point in the law. It gives to the law the quality of conservatism, and men have even said of the law that it is the crystallized wisdom of the ages. Believe me, human law based upon natural law is a very good thing indeed."

"Why," said Bob, becoming calm at once, "what you say sounds very reasonable, and I believe it is true. How foolish I was to want to explode this great bombshell on which this building stands. Think of it! Twenty-five thousand miles around! What energy it possesses! My God! I have dropped the match!"

A look of awful horror overspread Bob's features, and then — *Carnegie and I were the only occupants of the room!* Poor Bob Palmer was gone. He had stood there an instant, with that look of intense consternation upon his face, and then there had been a cold draft of air and a sound like the sharp clicking of glass overhead, and at that same instant of time Bob Palmer had disappeared from the spot where he had stood with our startled eyes upon him, while in the skylight above the room there had appeared an oblong hole about eighteen inches in length, which had not been there before. Investigation afterwards showed that there were no broken pieces of glass about, and the appearance of the glass that was still in place made it apparent that it had been broken by a force so incredibly swift as to melt it about the edges of the hole.

That's all I know. Three days afterwards one of his relatives and I placed Carnegie in a private insane asylum and the physician in charge stated that he was incurably insane. I fear that my own reason will give way soon. I keep asking myself "Where

is Robert Palmer? Where is Robert Palmer?" and the answer to this ever-recurring query is so staggering that it turns my mind. Things being as they are, I do not see that it can be of any advantage to you to disturb poor Carnegie about the matter, and as for myself you will probably never hear of me again. An officer of the Trust Company in which Carnegie was interested will call on the widow of Robert Palmer and inform her of certain provisions which have been made for her.

In conclusion I can only ask that the family and friends of Robert Palmer will think of me as leniently as possible after reading this candid statement of my connection with the events leading up to his disappearance.

. . . . . .

That was the letter. I am forced to believe it. There is no other explanation. I have investigated, and I find that Carnegie is in an asylum as stated, and that he had been taking lessons in hypnotism for some time prior to the disappearance of my brother-in-law, and in addition to this my sister has been informed by the trust company that she will receive the dividends upon a handsome sum held by them in trust for that purpose.

And now I, too, am continually bothered with the question, "Where is Robert Palmer?" Is the power of mind infinite? Can it hurl bodies through space at a rate of speed such as would be produced by the explosion of a dynamite bomb the size of the earth? Does Robert Palmer's dust mingle with the distant stars? Does his soul survive after such an awful shock? Where, indeed, is Robert Palmer?

Honeymoon Cottage.*

BY MRS. HELEN COMBES.

IT was Aunt Hetty's legacy which made it possible for us to fulfil our dream of years, and take the cottage. When we went on our modest honeymoon, we laid plans for supplementing it some time, with a whole summer spent on the St. Lawrence. As year after year slipped by and the plans were never realized, we began to be afraid they never would. Just when we had resigned ourselves to the apparently inevitable, Aunt Hetty died and left us her money.

"Now, little woman," said Tom. "Now, we 'll have that honeymoon in dead earnest."

We had talked so much about the cottage that it seemed as if all we had to do was to set about securing it. And it wasn't any surprise when we received, in answer to our advertisement, a letter and a picture of the identical cottage we had talked of. Not a pretentious place, but a cozy little nook, with roses running riot over it, and a lawn about as big as a pocket-handkerchief sloping down to the water. The price was more moderate than we had expected, and we could take possession at any time.

Tom laughed at my anxiety lest some one else should secure the cottage. He argued that we ought not to take it without some investigation, but I quieted his scruples by showing him that this was the very cottage we had been talking of for years, and that no other would seem like home to us.

So the cottage was hired, and we began to prepare for our exodus. I had to consult Tom about the household arrangements and he had to have my advice about the fishing tackle, for we were both enthusiasts in the matter of fishing. So it

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scarcely seemed any time, from the day we took the cottage, till the one when we left our city home and began the journey northward. Traveling all night we arrived at noonday, tired but still enthusiastic.

Nor were our hopes, as so many are, doomed to disappointment. Honeymoon Cottage, strange as it may seem, was even more charming in reality than in its picture. The rooms were small and few, but the roses were there, the water was there, and there was a general air of homelikeness about the place which made us feel that it had actually been waiting for us all these years.

We brought with us our maid, who was almost as much a part of the household as ourselves, and the man-of-all-work as well, and these, with the many little trifles which we had taken from our home store, seemed to slip naturally into their places, so that, with all working their hardest, evening found our new home almost in order. And when, after the late tea which we made to take the place of dinner, we went out on the piazza, and Tom stretched his luxuriant length in the hammock while I lounged in my comfortable deck chair, we both heaved big sighs of satisfaction.

"By Jove," said Tom, wonderingly, "it isn't often people plan things for years and years, and then, when they reach reality, find it up to their expectations."

"It 's perfectly wonderful," I agreed. "If we 'd built the cottage ourselves, and chosen the spot too, it couldn't have suited us better."

"Aren't you afraid of getting lonesome on this little island with only me for company?" Tom asked.

"Lonesome," I echoed, scornfully. "With the next-door neighbor — or rather the next-door island — within a stone's throw, and with Lizzie and Jake, and this dear little cottage, and the view and the roses, to say nothing of the fishing! Did Eve get lonesome in Paradise?"

"I 'm afraid she did," said Tom, teasingly, "else why did she have to talk to strangers to pass the time, and thus get into mischief?"

"Well, I 'm not going to talk to strangers for the present,"

said I, "for the man that brought us over said the folks on the next island didn't come till the first of July, and that's nearly a month off. The only people we shall see are those who bring our milk and supplies, and the 'ships that pass' in the day-time. Though I suppose we are likely to meet people on our fishing excursions."

Tom did n't answer. He lay in the hammock lazily smoking and gazing over the starlit water. Somebody was rowing in the distance, and the sound of voices and the splash of oars were the only sounds which broke the perfect stillness.

"If you 're going to get up and catch fish for breakfast, you 'd better go to bed," I said presently, and Tom obediently arose. He stood beside me for a minute before we went in and, laying his arm around my shoulders, said softly, "Little woman, it was worth waiting for, wasn't it?"

It seemed as if I had never slept as soundly in my life as I did that night. I certainly never woke more hungrily ready for my morning meal. Tom had crawled out so quietly that I had never heard him, and I judged by the odors that floated up the narrow stairs that either he or Jake had made good the promise of "Fresh fish for breakfast." Indeed the smell was so tempting that I only lingered a minute to enjoy the exquisite view from my window. And before I was dressed, Tom was calling impatiently, "Breakfast's ready, and the finest morning you ever saw is going to waste."

We spent the day getting acquainted with our new location. Leaving Lizzie and Jake in possession of the island, we took a boat and luncheon, not forgetting the fishing tackle and the bait. And the exploring trip proved so delightful that it lasted well into the afternoon, and only allowed time for a short rest and a wash-up, before the fish we had brought home were ready to eat.

After supper we sat on the piazza, while inside the house Lizzie was moving about among the pots and kettles. Jake had permission to use the boat and was out trying his luck. We were both so tired that I think we were dozing, when Lizzie burst out on us with a frightened face.

"If you please, ma'am, there 's somebody in the cellar."

"In the cellar," Tom said, incredulously. "What do they want?"

"I don't know. I did n't stop to ask," Lizzie acknowledged.

"Well, what did they look like?" asked Tom.

"I did n't see 'em," said the scared domestic. "I just heard somebody talking, and then I ran upstairs as fast as I could go."

Tom rose from the hammock.

"Get a lamp, Lizzie," he said. "I'll go down and see who's there."

"I wouldn't if I were you," I began, timidly, but Tom interrupted.

"Not go and see who's in my own cellar," he said, jokingly. "I guess Lizzie must have been dreaming, or else she heard us talking and thought it was some one inside."

"We hadn't spoken for ten minutes when she came out," I objected; but by this time Lizzie was out with the lamp.

"Good-bye, little woman," said Tom, teasingly, as he took it from her. "If I don't come back you'll know it's because I found good company down there."

"Wait," I called after him, "I 'm coming with you." But Lizzie barred my way with some question about the breakfast.

Five minutes went by, and Lizzie trotted off to her own domain. I wondered what Tom could be doing down cellar, but instead of going to look for him, I sat down and took up a book. Ten minutes passed, and then I called to Lizzie.

"You'd better go down and see what Mr. Ferguson is doing," I said; and I heard her heavy shoes clatter down the steps and back.

"He isn't there," she announced when she returned. "Leastways, there's no light."

"Are you sure?" I said, incredulously.

"Yes, ma'am," she answered.

Now Tom was given to practical joking, and my first thought was that, hearing Lizzie coming down, he had blown out the light and hidden to tease me. So I calmly took up the book again.

"I expect he came up, and went out," I said. "No doubt

he thinks we shall go hunting for him, but he's mistaken. The joke will be on him this time."

Ten minutes went by. Then I heard Jake come up the back steps, and called him.

"Did you meet Mr. Ferguson?" I asked.

"No, ma'am," he answered.

"Then I wish you'd take the lantern and go down cellar," I said quietly, though by this time I was beginning to feel nervous. "Lizzie thought she heard some one talking and he went down there half an hour ago, and hasn't come back."

Jake lit the lantern. I followed him to the head of the stairs.

"Is he there?" I asked.

"No, ma'am," Jake answered. "The lamp's down here with the chimney off."

Then I began to get thoroughly alarmed. I ran down the stairs myself and looked hastily around. There was not a corner where any one could hide. Nay, come to think of it, there were no stairs to come up except those which ended in the kitchen, and if Tom had come up those Lizzie must have seen him. I took the lantern from Jake's hand and went round the cellar, even looking into the barrels and boxes in which our household goods had been packed.

But all in vain. It was evident there wasn't a living thing in that cellar but Jake and myself.

"He must have climbed out of the window just to tease me," I murmured; though, remembering Tom's size and looking at the small windows high up near the ceiling, such a proceeding seemed very unlikely.

It was no use to stay in the cellar, for Tom was certainly not there. So I went upstairs and, throwing a light shawl over my shoulders, and taking Lizzie with me, I set out in one direction to look for my missing husband, starting Jake on a different round, with instructions to shout when he came across his master.

But we made the tour of our side and met Jake at the piazza again without sighting Tom. The boat was drawn up where Jake had left it when he came in, so it was evident he had not

left the island that way. He was but an indifferent swimmer, and it seemed totally unlikely that he should have voluntarily gone overboard. If he had gone for a walk and fallen in accidentally the water was shallow enough all around the island for him to have readily scrambled out.

I was shivering now with apprehension, and dispatched Lizzie to the kitchen to make some hot coffee, while I sat down to think about what was best to be done. I sat for ten minutes, unable to come to any definite conclusion, and then Lizzie came in with the coffee.

"Call Jake," I told her; and when the man came in I said, "I 'm beginning to be afraid that something has happened to Mr. Ferguson. What had we best do?"

"Hadn't Jake better take the boat and get somebody to help him make a search?" Lizzie suggested.

Jake demurred. "I don't like to go off an' leave you and the missis alone," he objected. "If there's anybody around it's not safe."

"There is n't anybody around," I said positively. "If there had been we should have come across them. We will go once more through the cellar, and then Jake shall call on our nearest neighbors for help."

It was only a perfunctory search. We knew well before we began it that we should find nothing. The cellar was bricked from floor to ceiling and paved with flagging. Jake suggested that there might be a hole under one of the flags, but careful knocking on each failed to give out any hollow sound. He searched the walls closely as well, but they were solid and there was positively no way of getting out of the cellar except through the door at the head of the stairs or through the small windows.

Looking back at that night, I have often wondered how I managed to keep up my courage. Every moment the conviction that something was grievously wrong grew. I stood in the middle of the floor and called with all my strength, but nothing replied to my frenzied appeal. Finally we gave it up and returned to the parlor.

Jake carried out Lizzie's suggestion and summoned aid from

our nearest neighbors. Three or four men returned with him and, after listening to our story, they searched the island, the house, and the cellar, but without avail. Then they went down to the water with their lanterns, and patrolled the narrow strip of beach, but without results. Dawn broke and still the search went on, but no clue to the mystery disclosed itself.

At daylight the neighbors went home, and Jake was dispatched to the nearest town for the police. They arrived about noon, and went over the ground inch by inch. The flags in the cellar were taken up, but there was nothing but solid dirt beneath. The walls were broken in various places, but not a trace of Tom Ferguson was discovered. Late in the afternoon, from sheer exhaustion I fell asleep. I dreamt that Tom stood over me, and said softly, "Don't fret, little woman. I'm not dead. Go home and wait for me." With a cry I woke to find it nothing but a dream, but a dream which at least dispelled my fast-growing belief that Tom was dead. He was alive, of that I was now sure. Something had happened to take him away, and all in good time I should know what it was. In the meantime I must go back home, and wait for him as he had wished.

And this plan I carried out, in spite of the evident belief of my friends that Tom's disappearance had upset my reason, and that my subsequent actions were the result of a disordered mind. I refused to put on mourning, or to act as though bereaved. The newspapers teemed with accounts of Tom's disappearance. The general theory seemed to be that he had come from the cellar and gone down to the water, either falling in accidentally or committing suicide. Some papers, dilating on the sound of voices, declared he had been kidnapped. Others, looking for sensation, said there was undoubtedly another woman in the case; advancing the theory that she had happened along in a boat and taken Tom away with her. But the mystery remained unsolved, and the only person who believed in the ultimate return of Tom Ferguson was Tom Ferguson's wife.

The legacy which had taken us to that ill-fated spot proved of good service now, for Tom had absolutely no relatives living, and with the little he had saved and the legacy combined I

managed to live comfortably. He had carried a heavy life insurance, and two of the companies offered to come to a settlement with me, so firm was their belief that Tom was dead. But I refused their money, telling them that I believed my husband was alive; and, by and by, people began to let me alone and to forget the mystery of the cottage on the St. Lawrence.

The years rolled quietly by. Lizzie and Jake clung to me faithfully, the only change being when Lizzie asked my permission to get married, announcing, tragically, "That Jake he does be bothering me so that the only way I can get rid of him is to marry him." So the faithful servitors were married, and after that events were scarce in our little household, time going by slowly and quietly.

One evening in the late fall, three years after Tom's disappearance, I sat in my little sitting-room sewing and thinking as I constantly did over my strange widowhood. The bell rang, but I paid no attention to it until Lizzie came in.

"If you please, ma'am, there 's a strange man out here, and he does be asking for the mistress," she said.

"Why don't you show him in?" I asked.

"He don't look like the kind of man to be bringing in the parlor," she declared. "I left Jake to watch the umbrellas and things till I came to tell you."

I got up and went to the door. The strange man stood with his back to me, but at the sound of my footstep he turned.

"Tom! Tom Ferguson," I shrieked. "Lizzie, don't you know him? It 's Tom. It 's my husband!"

The man looked at me in bewilderment. It was evident that he did not recognize me, and Lizzie also looked at me, surprised out of her usual stolidity.

"It can't be, ma'am," she whispered, compassion in her tones.

"If 'twas the master wouldn't he have been knowing me? And he don't seem to know either of us. He asked if this was No. 20, but he didn't know the place at all."

All this time the man had been looking round in a bewildered way. I took him by the hand and led him into the sitting-room, where the light was better.

"Tom," I said beseechingly, "don't you know me? This is home. I am Susie, your wife."

Then he spoke. It was Tom's voice, changed somewhat and with hesitancy in its tone, but still his. Lizzie, hearing it, cried out: "Sure 'tis the master. 'Tis himself and no other," and Tom looked at her in surprise as she seized his hand, tears running down her honest face. His look of bewilderment deepened and I whispered to Lizzie, as he passed his hand across his face, "Don't excite him. Can't you see he has been ill, and seems to have lost his memory? Get him some warm coffee and help me to make him comfortable."

So Tom came back. But what a home-coming! He knew none of us. Our inquiries, cautiously made, brought no response but the puzzled "I don't know," which he had uttered in answer to my appeal. How he had found his way back — where he had been in the interval — what had happened to him — all were a sealed book, to which it seemed impossible to find the key.

Tom seemed to be in good health, though much thinner than when we lost him. He had evidently found his nerves, for he would start at any sudden noise or footstep, and under no circumstances would he go into a room alone at night. His appetite was good, and he seemed to relish and enjoy the little dainties which Lizzie made in her endeavors to bring to his mind the days before his disappearance. But he lived only in the present, and the past was evidently as much of a blank to him as to us.

Of course, the news of Tom's return got about, and we were besieged by curious people, reporters especially, who were anxious to see him and would scarcely be denied. But Tom seemed to shrink from strangers, and I finally decided we had better go away for awhile to where people would not know us and insist on intruding.

So, with Lizzie and her Jake as body-guard, we went South for a change. We tried to keep to ourselves on the train, but people were evidently curious. One man in particular seemed to be interested in us and, finally, while Tom was taking a nap, he approached me.

"Pardon me, madam," he said courteously, "I am a doctor, and I cannot help seeing that something is wrong with the gentleman with whom you are travelling."

His manner led me to believe he was not a mere curiosity seeker, and some impulse urged me to confide in him.

"My husband is very unfortunate," I confessed. "He has entirely lost his memory. Not but what he can remember what happens from day to day, but there is a period in his life which is altogether blank."

The interest in the doctor's eyes deepened.

"Could you account for his loss of memory, by any accident —such as a fall or a blow?" he asked.

I saw there was no way of explaining, excepting to tell him the whole story, and, though I was reluctant to talk of it, I made up my mind to take the plunge.

I found the task easy because the doctor, as soon as I mentioned the disappearance, stopped me to say that he had followed the case with much interest at the time, but that, having just returned from abroad, he had failed to hear of Tom's unaccountable return. He was surprised to find that we had not at once taken Tom to a surgeon to be examined, and was beginning to state his belief that such a course would be advisable, when Tom awoke and I was obliged to go to him.

After dinner the doctor came to our section and began a conversation with me. By and by he spoke to Tom and included him in it, and from that time the conversation lay chiefly between the two. I watched the doctor and saw that he in turn watched my husband keenly and carefully. I was not surprised when, before retiring for the night, he managed to speak quietly to me and asked me for a few minutes' conversation in the morning.

Well, the outcome was that I found the doctor to be a specialist in diseases of the brain, and learnt his belief that a blow or a fall had injured my husband's brain, and that an operation might restore him to a normal state. Of course, he made no hint of offering his services professionally, but, learning that his home was in the town to which we were going, I asked him to call and tell me what was best to be done.

The call was duly made, a consultation with another well-known specialist was arranged, and it was finally decided to operate. Both believed that the sooner the better, and as soon as Tom had had time to get over the fatigue of the journey it was done. It was entirely successful in one particular. When Tom awoke from the sleep into which the anesthetics had thrown him, he opened his eyes and said "What made the lamp go out?" He recognized me, not as the woman with whom he had lived during those clouded months, but as his wife of long years. But that was all. From the time the lamp dropped from his hand, until the time he awoke from his sleep on the operating table, he remembered nothing.

As his brain grew stronger he used to try hard to recall what had happened, but, though later on he took up all the threads of the old life with zest and vigor, there always remained that puzzling three years' blank behind it.

Of course the story should end here. But it doesn't. Three years later I was summoned to a city hospital to see a dying man, and by him the mystery was solved.

It seemed that the cottage we took had long been the headquarters for a gang who made money smuggling opium and other things across the Canadian border into the States. The gang learned of our taking the cottage, but were deceived about the date of our arrival. Though they managed to remove all their goods from the cellar, the passage which connected it with their headquarters on the Canadian shore still remained open. Men were at work bricking up the passage when Lizzie's fright took Tom down cellar to investigate. The trap-door had been removed and a flag put in its place, but the packing under it had not been made secure, and Tom, stepping on it, went down into the hole. Of course, the men were panic-stricken; but a hurried investigation showed that he had received a blow from the stone on which he had fallen which deprived him of consciousness. In the consultation which followed it was decided that he must be kept with the gang at least until it was learned whether it would be safe to let him go. The men worked all night filling up the hole and did it so cleverly, retreating by the passage as they did so, that when the police arrived there

was no trace of it to be found. Tom was taken to the headquarters of the gang. Days passed and he did not regain consciousness. The smugglers, fearful of letting him go, not knowing but that his senses would return and his disclosures result in a search which would be disastrous for them, decided to keep him for further developments. Rigid confinement was not necessary, only in so far as keeping him hidden from prying eyes went, for he was totally unconscious of the fact that he did not belong among the smugglers. Years went by. Death took the leader and it was decided to disband. The smugglers, of course, had followed the case in the papers and they knew where Tom's home was. One of them — the one who finally told me the story when he was almost beyond the reach of earthly punishment — was deputed to return Tom to his people, there being apparently no danger that he would ever be able to tell where he had spent the years of his absence. So he was brought to the end of the street, told to go to No. 20 and ask for the mistress.

Tom now insists that next summer we shall go back to the cottage, but I shall have something to say about it, and I don't think we will.

The General's Term of Office.*

BY MONTGOMERY B. PICKETT.

THE General had decided to run for Sheriff. Two very different motives influenced him, the more important of which was the "negro question," which had become a grave problem in Hanover County. Clashes between whites and blacks had been frequent, and a race war seemed imminent. Some of the General's closest friends had convinced him that he, better than any one else perhaps, might handle the situation.

The secondary consideration was the wholly unsatisfactory condition of the General's finances. He could hardly see, in fact, how his old homestead, with its few remaining acres, could be saved. All that was left of one of the stateliest plantations in the South seemed about to pass from the possession of the last member of the only family which had owned it since the colony was originally settled. The trust company in the North, however, could hardly be expected to understand either the General or all that the old place meant to him, and was threatening foreclosure on the overdue mortgage. Little by little, the broad acres had been encumbered and lost, but the proud old man and his wife, unconquered by adversity, lived their simple lives, alone with their love and the memory of the two gallant sons who, as privates in their father's own brigade, had fallen in the first Battle of the Wilderness.

"Mother," the General said one evening, looking at her somewhat apprehensively through his shaggy white eyebrows, "there seems but one thing to do, and that is to run for Sheriff at this fall's election."

His voice had the strength of decision, but the thought, now

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finding expression for the first time, was almost as startling to him as to his wife.

She was quick to recognize the tone of determination.

"But, General," she protested, "you are too old; you could never stand the hard work and exposure. Beside —" and she abruptly stopped, earnestly regarding him through misty eyes. She remembered what the doctor had said about his heart, and how important it was that he be spared all excitement and fatigue.

But his ancestors for generations agone and their own children lay buried in this dear old soil. And so it was that, after many misgivings, he announced his candidacy. The campaign was not an exciting one, as there was no real competition, although the office of Sheriff of Hanover County was usually sought eagerly, for the very considerable income derived from it. The General had never before been in politics, steadfastly refusing, even in the hard and uncertain years following the war, to allow his name to be used by his loyal friends in connection with any position of public trust.

His election was practically unanimous, even the negroes, some of them his former slaves, forgetting party animosities, and voting for "Marse Gen'el," as they had called him since the war.

Shortly before his election, one of his old house servants, a negro named Sam Washington, had been convicted and sentenced to death for the murder of the editor of the town newspaper, which had long been loud in its denunciation of negroes in general; it had recently urged actual violence as a means of subduing the "black plague," as it called them.

Sam's conviction was a surprise to many of those who knew him. He had been hard-working, sober and respectful, with a clean record in the past. But he had been the last person seen to enter the office of the *Clarion* on the night that the editor, working late and alone, had been shot down. His trial was brief, despite the efforts of a clever young attorney whom the General induced to defend him. He made no denial of having gone to the newspaper office on the evening in question, but claimed he went to warn and not to harm the editor. Cross-examination failed to shake his plain, simple story that he had chanced to learn that the crime was to be committed, and went at once to tell the editor

of his danger, but he had only laughed and told him to "clear out." He also admitted that he knew who the guilty person was, but refused to name the man. The fact that Mose Jones, commonly known as "a bad nigger" and who had married Sam's daughter, disappeared after the murder did not seem to be noticed by the angry townspeople, who had first organized for a lynching, and then cooled down to a persistent clamor that Sam Washington be hung — as an example. He was sentenced to death on evidence wholly circumstantial, but almost any evidence against a negro is sometimes good enough when race prejudice has reached a fever heat.

Sam's lawyer promptly moved for a new trial, which was denied, and his friends had no money to carry the case through the higher courts. It was then that the General, full of confidence, went to the Governor to intercede, but without avail. The Governor was sorry, but the man had been properly tried and convicted; crime amongst the negroes was rapidly increasing, and he was unwilling to interfere for even so distinguished a gentleman as the General.

"Governor," he had finally said, "may I tell you of an incident which occurred fifty years ago? It was on the evening of my wedding. After the ceremony, my bride and I had led the cotillon. Later, I took her to the veranda where, outside the railing, were gathered a number of the family servants, hoping to catch a glimpse of the scene within. For a few moments I left her to bring a glass of punch; returning, I saw that, in response to the merry greetings inside, she had stepped to the doorway; just then a candle fell from the side wall to her feet, and in an instant her clothes, of the light and ample kind that the ladies wore in those days, were ablaze. It all happened in a moment's time. Those about her were young, and seemed stunned with fright. I rushed toward her, but, with the usual impulse to run, she darted back to the veranda, where stronger and quicker arms than mine caught her. A negro had sprung over the railing and was fighting the fire, which had spread alarmingly through her draperies. With bare hands and arms he extinguished the flames — she was only slightly injured, but the man was pitiably burned. "Governor," he continued, his voice full of feeling, "that negro was Sam Washington, my body servant. When the war came, he followed me

through it all, and bore the dead bodies of my boys from the battle-field. It was from his trembling lips I first learned they were dead. I know every impulse of this man's heart, Governor, and I beg you will believe me, sir, he is innocent of any crime."

But the Governor was a practical politician of the later school. He said he was deeply moved by the General's story, but really could not consistently do anything to save the man's life; there had been much crime among the negroes in Hanover County, whose citizens demanded that full and adequate punishment be meted out.

With a heavy heart the General left, and then, for the first time, he seemed to realize that if Sam were hanged it was he whose duty it would be to carry out the sentence. But even then, he felt sure that the Governor would not let him hang.

"He will remember all that I said to him," he told his wife, and full of his own belief in Sam's entire innocence, his hopes grew stronger as the days went by.

It was not until the morning of the Friday set for the execution that he gave up. His long telegram to the Governor the evening before, begging at least a respite, had been answered by his Excellency's private secretary to the effect that he was directed by the Governor to say finally that he could not interfere, and that the law must take its full course. He told his wife.

"General," she said, "you must resign."

But he could resign only to the Governor, who he knew would refuse to accept it then, as he had not yet appointed his deputy, having been unable to decide between two of his old soldiers, both of whom needed the place. Besides, this would be a weakness, and the General was not that sort of a man. Nor would he attempt to swear in a special deputy now, merely to relieve himself of this awful duty. Never in his life had he shirked a responsibility that was of right his own.

"I have sworn to carry out the law," he said, "and there is now none who can relieve me of this oath."

With aching heart he rode to the jail, where two colored clergymen were vainly exhorting Sam to confess and ask forgiveness for his crime. He then walked over to the rough scaffold which had been erected in the public square adjoining. The rope dangled from the arm.

Already hundreds of men had gathered to see the execution.

As noon approached, the negro was led across the square through the clearing which had been made through the crowd. On each side walked one of the clergymen — in front the Sheriff of Hanover County. In his hands Sam held the little old Testament which the General's wife had given him, when with her husband and boys he had started to the war. He held his head erect — it was not the carriage of a guilty man. Firmly he ascended the scaffold. One of the clergymen said a prayer.

"Sam," asked the Sheriff, "have you anything to say?" He laid his hand, almost caressingly, on the negro's broad shoulder, loosely clad in the black gown of death.

The prisoner glanced apprehensively at the hundreds of eager, hungry-looking faces before him.

"Only to you, Marse Gen'el, only to you," he whispered. "I jes' wants you an' Ole Missis to know." His fear had almost passed away. "Marse Gen'el, I swears to God — I swears to you and Ole Missis, I is innocent!"

"I have always believed it, Sam," the Sheriff replied in a tone which he himself hardly recognized. "But the law holds you guilty, and the law must be fulfilled. There is One who knows your innocence, Sam, and you will soon go into His Court, where juries do not err."

The crowd was fast becoming impatient at even this slight delay.

"Hang him!" shouted some one on the outskirts.

"Cross your hands, Sam," the Sheriff said, taking up the rope which was to bind them. But instead, for one moment as if by some strange, mysterious impulse of the soul, the Testament still in his hands, the negro raised his arms reverently toward Heaven, his lips moving silently. As he did so, the sleeves of the death gown and of his poor ragged shirt beneath fell to his elbows. The Sheriff of Hanover County started with pain as he saw the great scars, pitiable yet in the silent story of the agony the man had suffered years ago. His frail military figure straightened and his faded eyes shone as he quickly turned and faced the crowd.

"Gentlemen," he said, lifting his hand, "gentlemen — *friends*,"

he implored, "most of you have known me since your boyhood. Is there one of you who can say that I have ever left undone a duty to my State, to my country, or to my fellow-man? But, gentlemen," and his voice rang with determination, "as Sheriff of this county, as one who loves his duty as he sees it, who loves the law of his land, and as a humble Christian who hopes to meet his God, *I refuse to execute this innocent man!*"

The momentary stillness which comes when men's hearts are stirred was broken by a voice some distance down the street shouting:

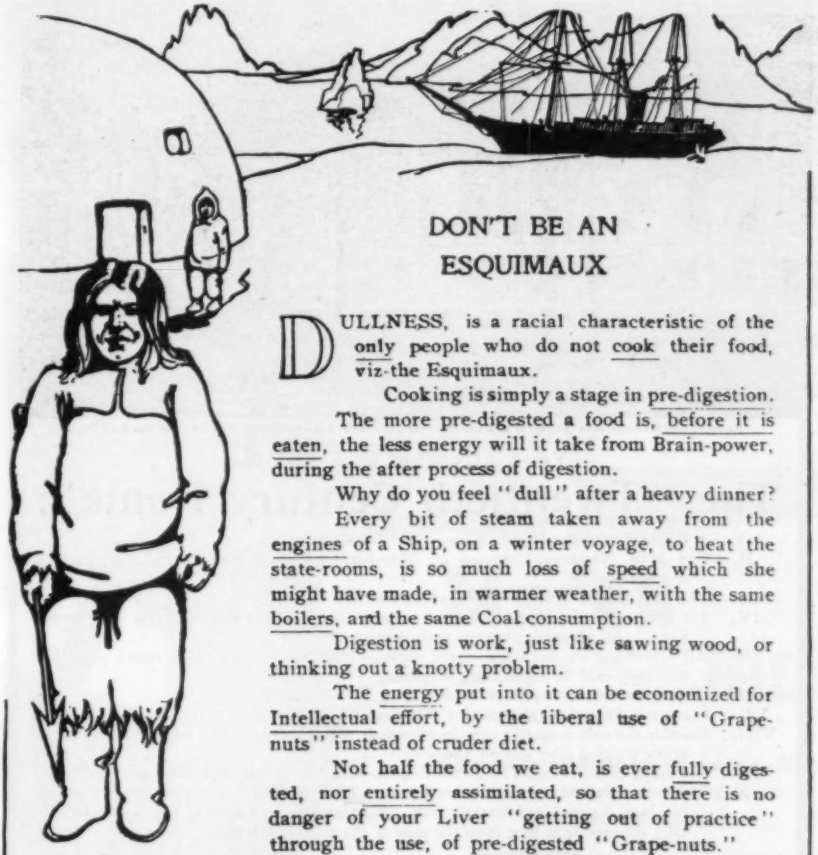
"*Wait! Wait!*"

It was the telegraph operator from the little railway station, who had left his key almost before he had finished writing the telegram which he was frantically waving. The Sheriff saw him from the scaffold's height, and intuitively his face softened. The excited operator hustled his way through the crowd, and running breathlessly up the steps handed the yellow slip to the Sheriff, who glanced at it, a look of triumph lighting his pale face. He made no comment, but read aloud:

> To the Sheriff of Hanover County:—
> Do not execute Samuel Washington. Sworn confession of negro named Mose Jones just filed in my office may prove him innocent. Await instructions.
> George R. Nelson,
> *Governor.*

The Sheriff's voice was firm throughout until the last word, which was broken by a sudden gasp. The telegram dropped from his fingers as he threw both hands to his heart, and then fell limply into Sam Washington's black arms, which folded like an Iron Cross upon his brave old breast.

The General's term of office had ended.



DON'T BE AN ESQUIMAUX

DULLNESS, is a racial characteristic of the only people who do not cook their food, viz-the Esquimaux.

Cooking is simply a stage in pre-digestion.

The more pre-digested a food is, before it is eaten, the less energy will it take from Brain-power, during the after process of digestion.

Why do you feel "dull" after a heavy dinner?

Every bit of steam taken away from the engines of a Ship, on a winter voyage, to heat the state-rooms, is so much loss of speed which she might have made, in warmer weather, with the same boilers, and the same Coal consumption.

Digestion is work, just like sawing wood, or thinking out a knotty problem.

The energy put into it can be economized for Intellectual effort, by the liberal use of "Grape-nuts" instead of cruder diet.

Not half the food we eat, is ever fully digested, nor entirely assimilated, so that there is no danger of your Liver "getting out of practice" through the use, of pre-digested "Grape-nuts."

The Postman doesn't forget how to walk, merely because he rides home on a street car, when he is tired.

"Grape-nuts" is Wheat, with its Energy-producing Starch, and its Brain-building Phosphates, pre-digested beyond the Liver stage, ready for prompt assimilation and superior Brain work.

A Government analysis proves it to be eighteen times readier for assimilation than Oatmeal, and thrice as dextrinated as the average Wheat food.

This analysis will be sent free on request.

Grape-Nuts